

Marine Safety Newsletter

US Coast Guard Marine Safety and Environmental Protection Directorate

Operation Safe Pack

In an effort to ensure Safe Passenger Vessel (Charter/Head Boat) Operations through increased awareness and visible enforcement of existing vessel safety and licensing regulations, Coast Guard Activities Baltimore, in conjunction with Maryland Natural Resources Police (MNRP), has launched Operation Safe Pack.

Activities Baltimore has received several reports indicating illegal passenger vessel operations within the vicinity of Kent Narrows, on the Eastern Bay and Chesapeake Bay. The reports indicated that numerous six-pack operators are exceeding passenger allowances and are operating under the command of unlicensed personnel. There is also concern that vessels are operating without state required Fishing Guide Licenses and are violating catch regulations.

On its first day of operations, Operation Safe Pack used the services of seven MNRP patrol boats of various sizes and one 21-foot Coast Guard RHIB to conduct simultaneous law enforcement boardings of all vessels operating in a predetermined "suspect" area. Two MNRP officers paired with two-person Coast Guard boarding teams on each boat boarded.

The operation has already boarded nine uninspected passenger vessels, checking for critical items, including: personal flotation devices, fire extinguishers, overloading and properly qualified (licensed) operators. The operation has protected 66 passengers and has uncovered five potentially dangerous conditions. In addition to pointing out violations, boarding teams distribute guidance on maritime safety and licensing.

The carriage of any passenger for hire on the navigable waters of the United States requires that an individual licensed by the Coast Guard operate the vessel. Properly licensed Captains may carry up to six passengers aboard an uninspected passenger vessel, provided they meet federal safety regulations. To further ensure the safety of potential customers, vessels carrying more than six passengers for hire are inspected annually by the Coast Guard and must display an approval decal and Coast Guard Certificate of Inspection.

There are over 260 inspected and an estimated 400 uninspected passenger vessels operating on the Maryland waters of the Chesapeake Bay.

Inside:

- 2 Towing Safety Advisory Committee Meeting Notice
- 2 New Rules Improve Fire Protection For Towing Vessels
- 2 USCG Approved STCW Courses Now Available
- 2 New Life Vests Offer Pirate Protection
- 3 How to Prepare Your Boat and Yourself For a Hurricane
- 3 CG Seeks Comments on National Performance Measures
- 3 STCW Form Guidance Issued
- 4 IMO Corner
- 5 Prevention Through People

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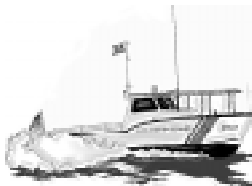
The *Marine Safety Newsletter* is published by the USCG Marine Safety and Environmental Protection Directorate to collect and disseminate information of general interest to the maritime community. The monthly newsletter prints abstracts of major USCG rulemakings, studies, special projects, and related events. Articles from non-Coast Guard sources may not represent USCG policy or views.

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www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/gmhome.htm

September 2000



Towing Safety Advisory Committee Meeting Notice

The Towing Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) and its working groups will meet to discuss various issues relating to shallow-draft inland and coastal waterway navigation and towing safety. All meetings will be open to the public.

The working groups will meet in Memphis TN, on Wednesday, September 13, 2000, from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and on Thursday, September 14, 2000 from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. These meetings may close early if all business is finished.

Written material and requests to make oral presentations should reach the Coast Guard on or before September 4, 2000.

For further information contact Mr. Gerald P. Miente, Assistant Executive Director, TSAC at: Tel.: 202-267-0229, Fax 202-267-4570, or by e-mail at: gmiante@comdt.uscg.mil. TSAC is on the web at: www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/advisory/tsac/tsac.htm

New Rules Improve Fire Protection For Towing Vessels

The U. S. Coast Guard has published its final rule on "Fire Protection Measures for Towing Vessels" [USCG 1998-4445] in the Federal Register. The purpose of the rule is to fine tune fire protection measures for towing vessels implemented by an interim rule published on October 19, 1999.

The changes clarify the requirements for fuel shut-off valves, fuel-tank vents, design of fire-detection systems for engine rooms, and safety orientations. These measures should decrease the number and severity of injuries to crews, prevent damage to vessels, structures and other property, and protect the environment. This final rule is effective on September 27, 2000, but owners of towing vessels have until October 8, 2001, to install the required equipment.

For further information, call Randy Eberly, Project Manager, (202) 267-1861, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, Office of Design and Engineering Standards (G-MSE), 2100 Second St. SW., Washington DC 20593-0001. The rule is also available via the Internet at: www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/aces/aces140.html

USCG Approved STCW Courses Now Available

The Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies (MITAGS) has earned United States Coast Guard's approval for a complete series of full-mission ship simulation courses designed to train mariners in the shiphhandling competencies listed within the Seafarer's Training, Certification and Watchkeeping Code (STCW95). Now mariners have the opportunity to develop the critical shiphhandling skills necessary to meet these new requirements without risk of damage to life, environment and property.

In addition to the STCW required courses, MITAGS has developed new three and five-day emergency shiphhandling courses for experienced pilots and masters. Custom shiphhandling programs are also available covering apprentice pilot, docking, single point mooring, underway replenishment, electronic charting, vessel traffic, transponders, portable piloting units and specialized vessel handling.

For more information contact Mary Matlock, Admissions Coordinator, (443) 989-3226, or e-mail: admissions@MITAGS.org; Web-site: www.mitags.org.

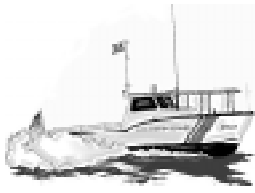
New Life Vests Offer Pirate Protection

The next development in providing safety and protection to seafarers from the rising incidence of pirate attacks is an armored life jacket said to resist knife and bullet penetration.

The Lorica Armored Lifevest weighs about 7 pounds and is encased in a high-tensile polymer fabric combining buoyancy and water resistance as well as protection.

William O'Neill, Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization, has commended the project as, "...timely in view of the global increase in maritime crime—especially piracy—and the consequential greater mobilization of law enforcement people on water."

Attacks on merchant shipping jumped 40% in the first half of the year over the 1999 period, though violence against seafarers declined. There were 77 reported attacks on crew in this year's first half, down from 375 at the same point in 1999, the International Maritime Bureau said. No crew are listed killed so far this year, although five are still classed as missing at sea.



How to Prepare Your Boat and Yourself For a Hurricane

If you live or if you boat in an area prone to hurricanes or heavy weather, know your local and national weather sources and monitor them continuously, contact your local marinas for information, and get into the habit of reading weather signs and monitoring the weather.

When a storm approaches small boats should be removed from the water and placed in a secure location that is above likely flood areas. Remove all loose items from the boat and make sure that it is securely tied to the trailer.

If your boat is too large to be removed from the water then move it to a safe haven well before the storm approaches. However, do not go out to sea in a recreational boat to "ride out" a hurricane.

If you are unable to move your boat from the water then:

- Use extra fenders or lash used tires to boats to protect them
- Double up and secure mooring lines
- Secure all hatches and portals and cover windscreens
- Take down mast whenever possible
- Remove all loose items from decks and superstructure and from area around mooring.
- Leave nothing unsecured.

If you get caught in a storm enroute:

- Secure boat and prepare passengers for possible rough water, heavy rains, and high winds. Have all aboard put on life jackets.
- Do not let passengers below deck remove life jackets. If you think the boat may sink, it may be best not to have passengers below deck at all; keep them above deck and attached to safety lines.
- Keep in touch with the Coast Guard or anyone else you can reach so someone knows your location and assistance can be sent if needed.
- Coast Guard frequencies are Channel 16 VHF/FM or 2182 MHZ. Do not use or rely on cellular phones in place of a radio.

If your boat swamps:

- Stay with your boat. Once in water, tether passengers together and keep moving slowly to keep circulation and body temperature up. Moving quickly can over-exert you.
- If boat sinks, board life rafts if available and stay with them. Huddling together will help keep body temperature up to help prevent hypothermia.

What to do following a hurricane:

- Do only what safety and authorities permit.

CG Seeks Comments on National Performance Measures

The Coast Guard announces the availability of, and seeks public comments on, the national performance measures proposed here for use as guidelines when mariners demonstrate their proficiency as Officers in Charge of Navigational Watches on ships of 500 gross tonnage or more as measured by the International Tonnage Convention (ITC).

A working group of the Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee (MERPAC) developed and recommended national performance measures for this proficiency and the Coast Guard has adapted the measures recommended by MERPAC, with some modifications.

Comments and related material must reach the Docket Management Facility on or before October 23, 2000. Identify your comments and related material by the docket number of this rulemaking [USCG 2000-7693].

Mail comments to Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, room, PL-401, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001, Fax: (202) 493-2251; Web site: <http://dms.dot.gov>.

For further information contact Mr. Mark Gould or Mr. Gerald Miente, Maritime Personnel Qualifications Division, Office of Operating and Environmental Standards, Commandant (G-MSO-1), U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, (202) 267-0229.

STCW Form Guidance Issued

The Coast Guard released the agency's policy for issuance of international endorsements prescribed by the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW).

The policy is to help ensure that the licenses and documents of U.S. crewmembers conform and thereby reduce the likelihood of vessel detainment in foreign ports. NVIC 6-00 can be found at the agency's homepage at www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/nmc/nvic.



New Mandatory Ship-Reporting System in English Channel Approved

IMO's Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation has approved a new mandatory ship-reporting system which would be applicable in the central English Channel, making it easier to track and communicate with ships in the area. The system would supplement the existing mandatory ship-reporting systems already established at Ouessant and in the Pas de Calais.

The system will be put forward to the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) at its 73rd session in November-December 2000 for adoption and would enter into force at 0000 hours UTC, six months after its adoption by the Committee.

The proposal for the new mandatory ship-reporting system follows the sinking of the tanker *Erika* off the west coast of France in December 1999 and should make possible a significant increase in safety, efficiency of navigation and environmental protection in and around the traffic separation system in operation off Les Casquets.

The implementation of a mandatory ship-reporting system makes it easier to avert hazardous situations which can be caused by unidentified ships adopting erratic or even dangerous routes, stopping in a traffic lane after sustaining damage, or otherwise behaving in a manner which could give rise to confusion in the absence of information.

The new system, to be called MANCHEREP, would apply to all ships of over 300 gross tonnage and would cover the current traffic separation system off Les Casquets and the areas bordering upon it. Ships over 300 gross tonnage entering the area would be required to give information to the coastal authorities, including name of ship, position, destination and details of cargo if any potentially dangerous cargoes are carried on board. Coastal authorities would then be able to track the ships.

Subcommittee For The Prevention of Marine Pollution

The Subcommittee for the Prevention of Marine Pollution (SPMP), a subcommittee of the Shipping Coordinating Committee, will conduct an open meeting on Tuesday, September 26, 2000, at 9:30 a.m. in Room 2415, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, 2100 Second Street, SW, Washington, DC.

The purpose of this meeting will be to review the agenda items to be considered at the forty-fourth session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 45) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO). MEPC 45 will be held from October 2-6, 2000. Proposed U.S. positions on the agenda items for MEPC 45 will be discussed.

The major items for discussion for MEPC 45 will include the following:

- Harmful aquatic organisms in ballast water
- Implementation of the OPRC Convention and the OPRC-HNS Protocol
- Harmful effects of the use of anti-fouling paints for ships
- Consideration and adoption of amendments to mandatory instruments
- Identification and protection of Special Areas and Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas
- Interpretation and amendments of MARPOL 73/78 and related Codes
- Prevention of air pollution from ships
- Promotion of implementation and enforcement of MARPOL 73/78 and related Codes
- Formal safety assessment including environmental indexing of ships
- Matters related to the 1973 Intervention Protocol

Members of the public may attend this meeting up to the seating capacity of the room. For further information or documentation pertaining to the meeting, contact Lieutenant Commander John Meehan, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters (G-MSO-4), 2100 Second Street, SW, Washington, DC 20593-0001; Telephone: (202) 267-2714;

E-mail: jmeehan@comdt.uscg.mil; or On-line at: www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/mso/mso4/mepc.html

International Transportation Symposium

Transportation not only connects industries with communities, but also creates essential links between and across nations. In Washington, DC this October 9th–12th, worldwide leaders from the aviation, surface and maritime modes of transportation will come together for the International Transportation Symposium: Moving to the 21st Century – Best Practices of Today and Lessons for Tomorrow.

The goal of this symposium is to share best practices and identify effective methods for exchanging information between transportation leaders of the future. The U.S. Coast Guard wholeheartedly supports this event. This symposium will encourage open communications and, akin to the PTP guiding principles, share commitment and promote the sharing of lessons learned.

Over a period of three days, participants will hear from transportation ministers, foreign and domestic industry leaders, academic experts, and other transportation officials. On October 11th, the three modes will separate and concentrate their agendas accordingly. Admiral James Loy, Commandant of the Coast Guard, will provide opening remarks for the maritime mode along with an introduction of the first panel entitled “International Standards in Maritime Transportation.” Rear Admiral Robert North, Assistant Commandant for Marine Safety and Environmental Protection, will assist as one of the five panel members for that discussion. They will discuss the effects, benefits and impact of international standards on their respective organization or country. Following the presentations, there will be time for ‘open mike’ contributions from the audience to hear other perspectives.

The second maritime panel is “Maritime Transportation Technology.” It will focus on best practices in the area of maritime navigation technology, such as the development of Automatic Identification System (AIS) technology and application of the Electronic Chart Display Information System (ECDIS). The third maritime panel is “Responding to Maritime Trade and Growth,” and the discussion will center on how governments and the world maritime industry can use global best practices to successfully respond to the predicted substantial growth in world trade over the next decade.

It is anticipated that conference participants will issue a joint statement on methods for implementing this effective exchange of information and ways to promote an international transportation system that meets the needs of the 21st Century. For those who wish to attend this important event, you may seek information via the Internet at: www.faa.gov/dotconf/wtc.html

This detailed site provides information on registration, exhibits, speakers and the full agenda. You may also contact Brenda Preston at (800) 532–1169 ext. 66397 or Angela Dilver–Dendy at ext. 61791.

PRINCIPLES

- Take a Quality Approach
- Honor the Mariner
- Seek Non-Regulatory Solutions
- Share Commitment
- Manage Risk

VISION

To achieve the world’s safest, most environmentally sound and cost-effective marine operations by emphasizing the role of people in preventing casualties and pollution.

GOALS

- Know More
- Train More
- Do More
- Offer More
- Cooperate More

Contact us directly with your PTP story:

Commandant (G-MSE-1), U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, 2100 Second Street, SW, Washington, DC 20593-0001; (202) 267-2997; (202) 267-4816 FAX; e-mail: fldr-he@comdt.uscg.mil

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• Readers receive their copy of the *Marine Safety Newsletter* around the 15th of each month.

Up to the Minute News
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www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/gmhome.htm.

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